

Washington State Patrol Media Release

Chief Ronal W. Serpas



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WSP To Participate In National Holiday Safety Campaign

Chief Ronal W. Serpas announced today the Washington State Patrol (WSP) will be joining other state law enforcement agencies across the nation in a Fourth of July weekend safety campaign entitled Operation C.A.R.E. (Combined Accident Reduction Effort). The goal of Operation C.A.R.E. is to reduce human suffering on our highways and interstates – particularly during the busy holiday weekends. These efforts will begin on July 4, 2003 and conclude at midnight on Sunday, July 6, 2003.

The WSP is committed to protecting our families, friends, and children by reducing the number of deaths and injuries on our highways and interstates through the pro-active enforcement of collision causing violations. Chief Serpas stated, "As long as there continues to be any loss of life on our highways, we are reminded we still have work to do."

Troopers will be working toward this goal by focusing their enforcement efforts on individuals who drive under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs (DUI), exhibit aggressive driving habits, speed, or fail to utilize seatbelts and child safety restraints. Troopers will be using marked and unmarked patrol vehicles, motorcycles, and aircraft during this time. Commercial vehicle safety compliance will also be included as the WSP continues its on-going effort to make Washington's highways as safe as possible.

The WSP Criminal Investigation Division (CID) analyzed fatality collisions investigated by WSP Troopers from January through May 2003 and found the survival rate for non-seatbelted persons is 13%, while the rate is 56% for those who chose to wear a seatbelt. During the first five months of 2003, as compared to the first five months of 2002, WSP investigated collisions are down 14%, injury collisions are down 12% and fatal collisions are down 8%.

"The evidence is overwhelming, not wearing a seatbelt causes loss of life and life altering injuries to our citizens," said Captain Brian Ursino, CID commander.

To contact a Public Information Officer in your area about the WSP's participation in Operation C.A.R.E., please visit our web site at www.wsp.wa.gov/newsfaqs/pio for contact information.

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